

CONSUMER
SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Adler, Lee and James D. Hlavacek (1976), "The Relationship between Price and Repair Service for Consumer Durables," Journal of Marketing, 40 (April), 80-82.

This paper considers the extent to which repair service persisted as a problem to consumers during 1975 and the relationship between original product price and maximum repair costs owners would be willing to pay over a range of low-to high-priced consumer durables. A 1975 mail questionnaire of U.S. households (N = 500, 25% response rate) was used to collect data that was compared with results of a 1972 Louis Harris Poll. The authors found that in the 1972-75 period, both consumer attitudes and experiences with respect to durable goods repair service improved. The data also revealed that respondents were willing to pay disproportionately higher amounts to have the lower cost products repaired. Of relevance are results pertaining to autos: 22% had a great deal or some trouble with repair service (highest of 10 product categories) and that 25% regarded repair cost as too high (2nd highest). For mean original price of \$3000 for auto, mean maximum repair cost was \$258 (9%).

Anderson, Rolph E. (1973) "Consumer Dissatisfaction: The Effect of Disconfirmed Expectancy on Perceived Product Performance," Journal of Marketing Research, 10 (February), 38-44.

Four psychological theories are considered in determining the effects of disconfirmed expectations on perceived product performance and consumer satisfaction. Results reveal that too great a gap between high consumer expectations and actual product performance may cause a less favorable evaluation of a product than a somewhat lower level of disparity.

Ash, Stephen B. (1978), "A Comprehensive Study of Consumer Satisfaction with Durable Products", in Advances in Consumer Research, Vol. V, H. Keith Hunt, ed. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Association for Consumer Research, 254-62.

This paper describes a consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction study of 67 durable products. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed through the "dropoff-pickup" method to a probability sample of 600 dwelling units in one mid-western city during the fall of 1976. The analysis is based upon 119 usable questionnaires. Of relevance is the result that 30.2% bought a new automobile within the past three years, 97% rated it as highly important to me or my family making it fifth ranked in importance of cars and other transportation durables; and that 32.4% were somewhat or quite dissatisfied with the purchase making it fourth ranked in dissatisfaction. Kendal's Tau correlation coefficients were negative with respect to the sex, marital status, employed, and own/rent home variables. Number of residents, education, and income were positively correlated while age showed a non-significant relationship.

Automotive News (1980), "Dedicated Drive For Quality Called Top Priority At GM," December 1, p 4.

This article reports on an address by GM's executive vice-president F. James McDonald. McDonald stated that GM's future depends on the public perception of quality: Quality is linked very strongly with customer satisfaction. GM plans to achieve improved quality and customer satisfaction through new technology, improved manufacturing techniques and more modern facilities and equipment. GM spending \$40 billion worldwide between 1980-84.

Bernacchi, N.D., Ken Kono, and Jack E. Smith (1979), "The Satisfaction of Consumer Complainers with Consumer Protection Agencies", in New Dimensions of Consumer Satisfaction and Complaining Behaviour, Ralph L. Day and H. Keith Hunt, eds. Division of Research, School of Business, Indiana University, 83-5.

A February, 1977 sample of 1188 respondents who had complained to the Wayne County Consumer Protection Agency was surveyed regarding the complaint type, involvement in the complaint's resolution, the type of resolution received, and the degree of satisfaction at the end of the complaint process. The results indicated that complainers were better educated, younger, and earned more income than the average Wayne County resident. The analysis also indicated that satisfaction was greater when the complaint was related to a product versus a service, when the consumer was involved in the resolution of the complaint, and when a refund was offered. The authors conclude that consumer protection agencies should focus on obtaining refunds for the complainers, must involve the complainers and the resolution of their complaint, and must be especially conscious of service complainers.

Cardozo, Richard N. (1965), "An Experimental Study of Consumer Effort, Expectation, and Satisfaction," Journal of Marketing Research, 2(August) 244-249.

The expectations of 107 college juniors and seniors were manipulated by exposing them to one of two catalogues containing information about the price and quality of a number of ballpoint pens. Degree of effort was also manipulated by varying the subject's exposure to relevant written materials. These manipulations tested the contrast hypothesis where it was found that consumer satisfaction is influenced both by the effort expended to acquire the product as well as prior expectations.

Czepiel, John A. and Larry J. Rosenberg (1977), "The Study of Consumer Satisfaction: Addressing the 'So What'?" in Conceptualization and Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction, H. Keith Hunt, ed. Cambridge, Mass. : Marketing Science Institute, 92-119.

This paper explored various ways of asking "so what?". It indicated variety of questions asked, explored the assumptions underlying the study of satisfaction, and pursued the topics associated with satisfaction as a feedback measure. It suggested situations in which satisfaction as feedback might find greatest acceptance and delineated the main path research on satisfaction might take.

Darden, William R. and C.P. Rao (1977), "Satisfaction with Repairs Under Warranty and Perceived Importance of Warranties for Appliances," in Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behaviour, Ralph L. Day, ed. Bloomington, Indiana: Division of Research, Indiana University, 167-70.

This study reports the results of interviewing over 200 households in order to relate the perceived importance of more favourable warranty terms to appliance-related characteristics and personal characteristics. Multiple regressions were performed for each of the appliances of refrigerator, washing machine, clothes dryer, kitchen range, dishwasher, and freezer. Inspection of the regression coefficients across appliances reveals that perceived importance of warranties is slightly negatively related to satisfaction, number of years in operation, and age and positively related to approximate price.

Day, George S. (1977), "The Mystery of the Dissatisfied Consumer," Wharton Magazine, 2(Fall), 45-47, 58-59.

Dissatisfaction could arise from 1. poor performance of the primary function, 2. poor performance of the secondary function, 3. disparities between high expectations and perceived performances, 4. problems with the system, 5. introduction of a better alternative after purchase. There are also situations when the customer himself does not know of the problems. This article cites key results from several studies including the Marketing Science Institute survey for Sentry Insurance Company, the General Electric Continuous Consumer Survey Program, the 1974 Sears-Roebuck mail survey of customer feelings on fifty-two categories of general merchandise, and the 1975 survey of 2,419 households. Some factors revealed in the survey include: 1. the difference between consumer and business perceptions of the quality of products, 2. the focus of the private sector on satisfaction and the focus of the public sector on dissatisfaction, 3. the possibility of a dissatisfaction-prone group (34% of respondents account for 73% of all complaints), a group who may always be unhappy, 4. the remoteness of the manufacturer from consumer dissatisfaction, especially with less expensive products and services, and 5. customer complaints cannot be allowed to serve as the sole source of information about consumer dissatisfaction.

Day, Ralph L. (1977) "Extending the Concept of Consumer Satisfaction", in Advances in Consumer Research, Vol. IV, William D. Perreault, ed. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Association for Consumer Research, 149-54.

This paper presents the highlights of Day (1977 - ACR - IV) except that post-evaluation responses under favorable outcomes and dissatisfaction are also given.

Day, Ralph L. (1980), "Research Perspectives on Consumer Complaining Behaviour", in Theoretical Developments in Marketing, Charles W. Lamb, Jr. and Patrick M. Dunne, eds. Chicago, Illinois: American Marketing Association, 211-5.

This paper is a conceptual discussion of Consumer Complaining Behaviour which is specifically identified as redress seeking, complaining, or personal boycott. CCB is modelled as a distinct stage in the overall purchase process and specifically distinct from consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (it is an outcome of the latter). CCB can perhaps be predicted from

1. benefit of complaining (across benefit index), and
2. a psychological motivation to complain (psychological cost/benefit index).

Day, Ralph L. (1977) "Toward a Process Model of Consumer Satisfaction", in Conceptualization and Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction, H. Keith Hunt, ed. Cambridge: Marketing Science Institute, 153-83.

This paper provides a wide-ranging discussion regarding the theory and measurement of consumer satisfaction. Two major approaches for modelling consumer satisfaction are identified in the literature: 1. satisfaction is a function of expectations, and 2. satisfaction is the distance of the produce from an ideal product in a multi-attribute space. The first model is further discussed in terms of satisfaction occurring as a result of cognitive dissonance assimilation, contrast, or assimilation-contrast processes. A purchase/consumption/evaluation process model is presented where satisfaction is a function of:

1. Expectations of product performance (anticipated benefits), expectations of monetary and shopping costs (anticipated costs), expectations of the impact of the purchase on others (anticipated social impact)
2. Purchase/use - consumers' perceptions of nature and performance of the product or service and social context of purchase/consumption
3. Post-purchase - attitudes, personality, orientation to the consumption process, and knowledge and skills of the consumer. With respect to more complex products and services, additional factors moderating satisfaction include time span of use, complexity of the product, whether or not it is used in common by family or other group members, whether it is complimentary to other products being purchased, and whether or not it is a prestige product. Marketing practices also have considerable influence on consumers such as in pre-purchase circumstances e.g. advertising, purchase transaction e.g. out-of-stock conditions, delivery of purchase items, warranty problems, and credit and collection problems.

Day, Ralph L. and Stephen Ash (1979), "Comparison of Patterns of Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behaviour for Durables, Non-durables and Services", in New Dimensions of Consumer Satisfaction and Complaining Behaviour, Ralph L. Day and Keith Hunt, eds. Bloomington, Indiana: Division of Research, School of Business, Indiana University, 190-5.

This paper contains further analysis of the 1966 Bloomington study of 200 products/service classifications among 535 randomly selected households. In particular, comparisons of responses are made across the non-durables, durables and services questionnaires. A finding that was emphasized was that the pattern of responses on the 4-point S/D scale were compared and the use of the endpoints appears to be greater for the durables questionnaire, especially on the satisfaction end. Of relevance is the section concerned with reasons for consumer dissatisfaction of cars and other transportation durables. Inferior quality of materials was named most important by 22%, inferior quality of workmanship by 13% and incomplete warranty coverage mentioned by 9%.

Day, Ralph L. and Stephen B. Ash (1979), "Consumer Response to Dissatisfaction with Durable Products", in Advances in Consumer Research, Vol. VI, William Wilkie, ed. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Association for Consumer Research, 438-44.

This paper describes further results of the study reported in Ash (1978). A dropoff-pickup self-administered questionnaire to a probability sample of 600 dwelling units in Bloomington, Indiana, during the fall of 1976 resulted in 919 usable separate durable products questionnaires. Of relevance are the results of 24 instances of reported dissatisfaction involving a total of 97 mentions:

<u>Reasons for Being Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Total Mentions</u>	<u>Most Important</u>
The quality of materials was inferior	62.5%	21.7%
The quality of workmanship was inferior	60 %	13 %
The product had drawbacks that I was not told about when I bought it	41.7%	21.7%
The cost of using the product is higher than I was led to believe	37.5%	0 %
The warranty did not cover all the things that went wrong	45.8%	8.7%

Day, Ralph L. and E. Laird Landon, Jr. (1975), "Survey Data on Consumer Complaints for Consumer Protection Policy Makers," in Proceedings, mid-west AIDS Conference 40-44.

The premise for this paper is that complaints received by consumer protection agencies may both misrepresent the characteristic of the dissatisfied consumer as well as the type of product or service being complained about. The authors then refer to the quote "national consumer survey" being designed by the Federal Trade Commission in order to develop a products-buy-complaints matrix. They describe how they have administered modified versions of the national survey in their respective home cities of Bloomington, Indiana and Boulder, Colorado. Preliminary results from the Boulder study of 275 usable questionnaires indicated that "purchase of a new car" headed the list in terms of total mentions regarding the least satisfactory durables as well as the list for the least satisfactory durable.

Diamond, Steven L., Scott Ward, and Ronald Faber (1976), "Consumer Problems and Consumerism: Analysis of Calls to a Consumer Hot Line", Journal of Marketing, 40 (January), 58-62.

The study's objectives are 1) To characterize the kinds of problems consumers have and the kinds of consumers who call a hot line, 2) To identify the particular business sectors consumers complain about most often, and 3) To examine the interactions of consumers with the particular companies or businesses involved in consumer complaints. An analysis of a random sample of 150 calls from a total of more than 3,000 made to consumer hot line sponsored by an "eastern state's Attorney General's Office" was made. The major findings include: the largest proportion of consumer problems revealed (27%) centered around difficulty in the transaction itself-failure to deliver, product damage, etc.; these were followed closely (26%) by problems encountered in service or repair transactions. The latter problems were particularly common among callers from lower socio-economic households. Finally, consumers in the hot line segment held significantly more negative attitudes toward business than those held in the broader population.

Dowie, Mark (1977), "How Ford Put Two Million Firetraps on Wheels," Business and Society Review, 23 (Fall), 46-55.

This article relates the Ford Pinto case history in which it is reputed that 500 burn deaths have been caused due to improper placement of the gasoline tank. The article indicates that a cost-benefit analysis of retooling and human lives could not justify a change to the design. Instead, Ford has paid out millions in order to settle damage suits out of court as well as lobby against safety standards.

Engledow, Jack, L. (1977), "Was Consumer Satisfaction a Pig in a Poke?" Business Horizons, April, 87-94.

Although many firms have recognized the need to satisfy consumers, few organizations have given close thought to the meaning of measurement satisfaction. Satisfaction is defined here as the interaction of two factors in the individual - exasperation expectation level and his perception of the outcome. The problem is that expectation is not stable and changes with past experience. Hence, satisfaction itself can change depending upon past experiences.

Gaedeke, Ralph M. (1972), "Filing and Disposition of Consumer Complaints: Some Empirical Evidence," Journal of Consumer Affairs, (Summer), 45-56.

Questionnaires were mailed to 50 official state agencies and another 50 to voluntary associations located in each of the states regarding filing of consumer complaints, nature of consumer complaints, and agency or organization response toward consumer complaints. A total of 32 usable questionnaires were received from state agencies and 15 from voluntary organizations. A relevant result was that "new automobiles-sales and servicing" ranked first both among state agencies and voluntary organizations as being the area generating most complaints. Automobiles were mentioned most frequently by both groups as comprising the greatest number of safety-related complaints. Automobiles also ranked first in accounting for most warranty and/or guarantee complaints.

Gilly, Mary, C. (1979), "Complaining Consumers: Their Satisfaction with Organizational Response", in New Dimensions of Consumer Satisfaction and Complaining Behaviour, Ralph L. Day and H. Keith Hunt, eds. Division of Research, School of Business, Indiana University, 99-102.

A model of the purchase process is postulated with explicit attention paid to complaint behaviour after dissatisfaction. The complaint file of a major oil company, headquartered in Houston, Texas, was surveyed and 653 responses obtained. Satisfaction was measured and correlated with monetary loss claim, the amount of money paid by the company, and number of days required to resolve the complaint. It was found that complainants claiming no monetary loss had lower levels of dissatisfaction than those complainants claiming to have lost money. It was found that satisfaction was related to the proportion of monetary loss reclaimed but not related to the amount of monetary loss or the time taken to resolve the complaint.

Goodwin, Stephen A., Vijay Mahajan, and Bhal J. Bhatt (1979), "On Consumer Dissatisfaction: Consumer Arbitration as an Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanism." in Advances in Consumer Research Vol. VI, William L. Wilkie, ed. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Association for Consumer Research, 460-5.

A discussion of consumer arbitration as an alternative redress mechanism. Discusses in particular a consumer arbitration program of a Better Business Bureau program in a "large north eastern metropolitan area." Of interest is the observation that the majority of disputes were related to home remodelling (58%) followed by automotive (16%). The types of businesses involved in the dispute between 1973 and 1976 involved automotive in 7% to 26% of the disputes.

Grainer, Marc A., Kathleen A. McElvoy, Donald W. King, (1979), "Consumer Problems and Complaints: A National View", in Advances in Consumer Research, Volume VI, William L. Wilkie, ed., Ann Arbor, Michigan: Association for Consumer Research, 494-500.

This study reports preliminary findings of a survey of a randomly selected cross section (n = 2513) of U.S. households. Research issues addressed include: prevalence and generic types of consumer problems experienced, industries subject to consumer problems, degree of deprivation resulting from consumer problems, and complaining behaviour. 32.4% of households reported consumer problems during the previous year. Automobiles headed the list of products or services subject to the most consumer problems. Most of the problems reported in the automobile and appliance industries were with the services provided by repair facilities.

Gronhaug, Kjell (1981), "Complainers and Noncomplainers Revisited: Another Look At The Data", in Advances in Consumer Research Volume VIII, Kent B. Monroe, ed., Ann Arbor, Michigan: Association for Consumer Research, 83-87.

By a review of previous literature, three "models" were identified: the "resource", the "learning" and the "personality" model respectively. An empirical test of the three models was conducted in a survey of 2849 individuals between the ages of 25 and 80 who were members of a national panel (U.S.) maintained by Market Facts, Inc. Findings revealed only modest differences between complaining and noncomplaining consumers. Actual complainers were found to be: higher in buying experience; higher in income; higher in education; and tended to be younger than the noncomplainers.

Grønhaug, Kiehl (1977), "Exploring Consumer Complaining Behaviour: A Model and Some Empirical Results," in Advances in Consumer Research Vol. IV, William D. Perrault, ed. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Association for Consumer Research, 159-63.

A random household sample was drawn from a medium-sized Norwegian town on the west coast. Data were gathered on use behaviour and shopping habits, dissatisfaction, propensity to complain, on textiles, on cars, milk, meat, coffee, and vegetables in personal interviews among housewives (N=178). Cars had the lowest use-buy measure (93%), the second lowest level of dissatisfaction (21%), the highest level of propensity to complain (68%), and an average level of positive outcome of (71%). All complaints were directed toward the dealer. Correlations of the car measures with respect to dissatisfaction and propensity complaint were low but tended to be negative with age, live in town, white collar, and work outside home positive.

Gutman, Jonathan and Burton H. Marcus (1974), "The Effect of Adaption Level and Expectation on Satisfaction: Exploring the Howard and Sheth Model of Buyer Behaviour," in 1973 Combined Proceedings, Thomas V. Greer, ed. Chicago: American Marketing Association, 223-225.

The satisfaction construct as defined in the Howard and Sheth model of buyer behaviour was studied in relation to adaption level and expectation. Quality estimates of automobiles (purchased new and currently owned) were assessed in a personal interview situation (n = 114). It was found that during the first 2 years, new car owners adapted to the changes in their cars at such a rate that they did not particularly notice quality dropping off. Car owners became more satisfied with vehicles after 7 years. Results show that expectation and adaption affected the satisfaction of the owners for their cars.

Haefner, James E. and Steven E. Permut, (1975), "Indexing Consumerism Issues Through The Mass Media", Journal of Consumer Affairs, 9 (Summer), 81-89.

This study examined consumer complaints as indices of more global consumer issues through the use of content analysis. Every issue of 14 consumer and general business magazines were examined between July 1973 and July 1974. If a given article addressed itself to one or more consumer issues, counts were made. Categories were then created after all content analyses was completed. Auto complaints ranked 12th out of 15 major consumerism categories. There were 14 auto complaints and 10 of those dealt with the poor construction of cars and the need for more safety devices. The other 4 complaints dealt with the premise that mechanics are fraudulent and will try to cheat the consumer.

Hunt, H. Keith (1977), "CS/D -- Overview and Future Research Directions", in Conceptualization and Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction, H. Keith Hunt, ed. Cambridge, Mass.: Marketing Science Institute, 455-88.

The discussion comments made at the CSD April 11-13, 1976, conference were recorded and reviewed for key ideas. This overview is divided into seven sections:

1. Definitions and meanings of CSD
2. CSD measurements and methodology
3. Whether the normative deficit or the expectation model is more appropriate as the base for comparison in deciding the level of satisfaction.
4. Effective unawareness of information or alternatives on CSD
5. Dissatisfieds versus complainers
6. Social and personal factors that affect satisfaction
7. Social value and social policy applications and implications of CSD research

Kangun, Norman, Keith K. Cox, James Higginbotham, and John Burton (1975), "Consumerism and Marketing Management", Journal of Marketing, 39 (April), 3-10.

The study focuses on the meaning of consumerism, the relative importance of certain consumer issues, the choice of corrective actions as they relate to specific consumer problems, and the perceived importance of the consumer movement today and in the future. Company actions and industry-wide frameworks for evaluating possible alternative courses of actions for marketing management are presented. A convenience sample of 241 students, 55 nonemployed adult women, and 71 businessmen from a "large south-western city surveyed in 1973" was used. The authors conclude that those consumerism issues for which there is a broad acceptance of needs and the cost of implementing solutions is not too great are logical places for many firms to voluntarily take actions. These actions would be beneficial in terms of the company's long-run goals. If businesses do not respond to consumers' needs, government forces will undoubtedly act. Of relevance is the rated importance of information, health and safety, repair and servicing, pricing issues, pollution, product quality, and consumer representation in government.

Landon, E. Laird, Jr., (1977), "Consumer Satisfaction Research Orientation Differences Between Industry and Government," in Conceptualization and Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction, H. Keith Hunt, ed. Cambridge: Marketing Science Institute, 355-62.

Business and government are compared over the dimensions of goals (profit versus social welfare), consequent behaviour (product trials by brand, switching/legal action versus grievance resolution/votes/program funding), antecedent behaviour (marketing mix variables versus laws/rules/consumer education), consumer focus (a target market versus voters/political groups), satisfaction measure (sensitive to satisfaction versus sensitive to dissatisfaction), and product range/depth (few products/deep versus many products/shallow).

Landon, E. Laird, Jr. (1979), "Responding to Consumer Complaints: Organizational Considerations," in New Dimensions of Consumer Satisfaction and Complaining Behaviour, Ralph L. Day and Keith H. Hunt, eds. Bloomington, Indiana: Division of Research, School of Business, Indiana University, 91-4.

This paper describes the origin and structure of consumer affairs units in industry. The discussion includes reasons for their growth, the position of the unit in the organizational structure (general management, public relations, and marketing), and methods for handling, receiving and disposing of complaints within the organization. This article is relevant because it indicates a possible consumer protection mechanism that might be encouraged by actions taken by the public sector.

Lazer, William (1973), "The Consumer Movement and Public Policy Development," in Public Policy in Marketing Practices, Fred C. Allvine, ed. Chicago, Ill: American Marketing Association, pp. 35-50.

This article explores relationships between public policy considerations in the consumer movement, past and present. Perspectives on consumerism and the input of consumer information into the federal rule making process are explored. Comparisons are made between the characteristics and impacts of the current consumer movement and those of past years. Attention is directed to current trends in self-regulation and the implications for government regulations through a review of various self-regulatory examples. With respect to self-regulation, Lazer concludes that self-regulation including arbitration has not had a great impact but will expand in the future, 2. self-regulation will not replace new legislation because of the difficulties in getting industry-wide agreement and the political attractiveness of new legislation, and 3. government agencies and regulatory bodies will have new roles in the self-regulation process.

Liefeld, J.P., F.H.C. Edgecombe and Linda Wolfe (1975), "Demographic Characteristics of Canadian Consumer Complainers," Journal of Consumer Affairs, 9(Summer), 73-80.

A survey was made of over 17,000 Canadian consumers who had written a letter of complaint to one of several government or consumer agencies in 1972. The results indicated that the average consumer complainer was middle aged, well-educated, affluent, managerial/professional. The study also found that 49% of the complaint letters are written by only 24% of the consumer complainers and that consumers who wrote several letter of complaint were well-educated, affluent and had managerial/professional occupations. The findings were interpreted as suggesting that care must be taken in using consumer complaint data to identify the nature and severity of consumer problems in the marketplace or as a foundation for government policy and programs.

Marketing News, "Andreasen Reports only 25% of Problems Consumers See are satisfactorily Resolved,"
10 (July 16, 1976), pg. 9.

Consumers find problems with 20 percent of products and services. They report 40 percent of the problems to business. Sixty percent of the reported problems are resolved to the consumer's satisfaction. In all, only one-fourth of the problems people perceive are satisfactorily resolved. Alan R. Andreasen helped analyze results from a survey sponsored by Ralph Nader's centre for the study of responsive law. The survey data revealed that car, appliance and home repairs, mail orders and toys lead in the categories of complaints. Tires, Books, Radios, Tools, Lamps, and cosmetics were the most satisfactory, having the smallest percentage of complaints. Consumers are reluctant to complain about minor problems and some will not complain even when charged the wrong amount or given the wrong item. Companies in washers, dryers, cameras, clothing, books, and records do well in resolving complaints. Complaints about vacuum cleaners, home repairs, medical and dental repairs are not well resolved.

Cars were "the bad guys" where 32% of the purchases by the sample resulted in some nonprice problem.

The survey was based on an national urban sample of 2,400 households contacted the rough telephone surveys in 34 cities. It covered purchases in 26 product and eight service categories.

McNeil, Kenneth and Mille, Richard E. (1980), "The Profitability of Consumer Protection: Warranty Policy in the Auto Industry," Administrative Science Quarterly, 25 (September), 407-427.

Telephone interviews were completed with an average of 50 buyers from each of 33 Wisconsin area dealerships (1537 respondents) two months after car's registration (Fall, 1976) and again after a year's experience (Spring, 1977). Owners/managers of 29 of the 33 dealerships were also interviewed as were managers in service divisions of each of the 4 Detroit auto manufacturers, observers in national trade associations, and observers in government agencies regulating warranty protection. The authors suggest that the present level of poor warranty performance apparently reflects a strategic choice, conscious or unconscious, to maintain continuing relationships with customers through a reliance on the proprietary control over the market, rather than through investments in good will assets. Three possible explanations for this choice are explored. The first explanation, that the development of good will assets is not profitable because there is no effective demand for better warranty protection, is examined and rejected. The second explanation, that the development of good will assets is not profitable because the costs of adequate warranty protection would be too great, is also examined and rejected. The third explanation, that decision making is biased against the development of good will assets because of exclusive reliance on short-term accounting systems, is supported.

In total, this paper is relevant for understanding industry practice, analyzing consumer dissatisfaction, and providing suggestions for consumer protection programs.

Moyer, Mel S. (1981), "A Survey of Consumer Issues Among the People of Ontario," Toronto: Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, ISBN 0-7743-6480-7, October, 1981.

This study reports the results of surveying respondents 18 years of age and over living in private households in urban and rural Ontario. The government survey involved 956 interviews conducted in April, 1978 and the second, 885 interviews in November-December, 1980.

Olander, Folke (1977), "Can Consumer Satisfaction and Consumer Complaints Guide Public Consumer Policy?" Journal of Consumer Policy, 1(Spring), 124-37.

This paper distinguishes between subjective measures of satisfaction (reports from individual citizens about their feelings) and objective measures (measures which gauge welfare independently of the individual's appraisal of his own situation). The subjective measures of problems, complaints, and reported satisfaction are discussed and difficulties inherent in interpreting such data are stressed. The author concludes that such subjective measures are almost unusable as a basis for setting priorities and public consumer policy and lists a series of alternative objective indicators. This list both serves to identify possible public policy alternatives as well as a way of evaluating the implementation of policy alternatives.

Olander, Folke (1977), "Consumer Satisfaction - A Skeptic's View," in Conceptualization and Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction, H. Keith Hunt, ed. Cambridge, Mass.: Marketing Science Institute, 409-52.

An excellent paper which centres attention on the problems connected with using subjective satisfaction ratings in evaluating the marketing system and in assessing the effects of legislation and other public policy action. Difficulties identified in interpreting and using CS/D measures for public policy purposes include:

1. satisfaction is always judged in relation to a standard which varies among individuals and groups,
2. Unawareness of alternative options (many results indicate giving a person product information makes him subjectively less satisfied),
3. cognitive effects on satisfaction which make an interpretation of CS/D ratings difficult,
4. the Pollyanna hypothesis which states that people tend to report more satisfaction than dissatisfaction when asked about their own situation,
5. disregard for long-range and societal considerations,
6. expectancy effects, and
7. the implication that satisfaction is a desirable goal.

Complaints and perceived problems are not considered a desirable alternative to CS/D ratings because they suffer the same drawbacks. In addition, there is evidence that various groups in society have different propensities to complain. Olander's suggested alternative is to use objective indicators of consumer welfare - facts about products, producers, and macro-system functioning and data about the purchases and uses of products and services. Many specific examples are given. The appendix reviews European CS/D

Oliver, Richard L. (1980), "A Cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions", Journal of Marketing Research, 17 (November), 660-9.

Satisfaction is modelled as an additive combination of the performance-specific expectation and the resulting disconfirmation. Specifically, satisfaction is modelled as an additive function of expectation, prior attitude, intention and disconfirmation and tested in two samples of residents and students ($n = 291$ and $n = 162$ respectively). The model is tested in a non-recurring federal flu vaccination program study both among users and non-users. The disconfirmation variable was significant in all four equations. Expectation only in the user-student sample and prior attitude in the resident-user and student-non-user samples.

Oliver, Richard L. (1980), "Theoretical Bases of Consumer Satisfaction Research: Review, Critique and Future Direction", in Theoretical Developments in Marketing, Charles W. Lamb, Jr. and Patrick M. Dunne, eds. Chicago, Illinois: American Marketing Association, 206-10.

The theoretical bases used to frame research on the antecedents of consumer satisfaction are reviewed and critiqued. These approaches are identified as consistency theories (dissonance theory, negativity theory, assimilation-contrast theory) and social comparison theories. Based upon Heelson's adaptation level theory, Oliver proposes satisfaction equalled to a function of expectation and disconfirmation.

Olshavsky, Richard W. and John A. Miller (1972), "Consumer Expectations, Product Performance, and Perceived Product Quality," Journal of Marketing Research, 9 (February), 19-21.

A 2×2 factorial design among 100 male undergraduate students was employed to manipulate 1. expectation of quality of a tape recorder, and 2. actual performance. Main effects were detected and hypotheses, following consistency theories, that 1. Ss in high expectation - low performance would rate product quality higher than Ss in low expectation - low performance, and that 2. Ss in low expectation - high performance would rate product quality lower than Ss in high expectation - high performance, were confirmed.

Robinson, Larry M. (no date), "A Model of Consumer Complaint Behaviour: A Study of Complaint Behaviour of New Car Owners," unpublished paper, Georgia State University.

This study relates degree of complaint action taken (no action, went to dealer, complained to manager or owner, complained to manufacturer, agency, or lawyer) to variables reflecting the severity of the problem, awareness of recourse, personality characteristics, and attitudes towards complaining. A combination interview and mail survey was made of 4,400 1975 Chevrolet purchasers in Columbus, Ohio in February to August 1975. Useable returns of 62.5% of the 2,663 phone numbers contacted revealed that the groups representing different levels of complaint activity could best be discriminated on problem severity and all other problems with the car variables. The number of different types of complaint actions pursued by the respondent was also related while the strong action group could be discriminated on the understanding of consumer protection developments, inclination to complain factor and the general self-confidence and powerlessness variables. The model, however, was not particularly effective in predicting complaint behaviour.

Robinson, Larry M. and Roy D. Adler (1979), "Personality as an Explanatory Variable For Complaint Action of Automobile Buyers," in Proceedings of the Division 23 Program: 87th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, New York, 90-93.

A combination telephone interview and mail questionnaire field survey was conducted with a sample of 1975 Chevrolet owners. The subsample used in the study included 93 who took no action in response to a reported problem and 102 who took moderate or strong action to resolve the problem. This subsample was from 568 who returned completed follow-up mail surveys from a total of 907 telephone interviews in turn drawn from 2663 phone numbers gathered for 4400 Chevrolets sold between February and August, 1975. The results of comparing those who took no action against those who took moderate/strong action indicated that general self-confidence, socialization, and powerlessness discriminated between the two groups at the .10 level or better. The other personality constructs regarding dogmatism, political efficacy, I-E locus of control and specific self-confidence were not statistically significant in explained variation in group membership.

Romero, Louis, J., (1972), "Automobile Warranties in North America with Special Reference to the Ontario situation," an unpublished Master of Laws Thesis, Osgoode Hall Law School, York University, Toronto, September.

This thesis analyses different surveys conducted in the United States in relation to consumer dissatisfaction with new car warranties and service rendered under them. An empirical study of 323 Ontario new car owners was conducted in April, 1971; 51.31% of respondents had some repairs under warranty. Only 44.31% of those were successful in having defects fixed. 59.18% of respondents who had a defect had to return more than once to get car repaired. 15.74% of respondents weren't satisfied with the performance of cars. Dealers are not fulfilling their franchise agreements in regard to pre-delivery inspection of new cars.

There is a greater divergence between the rates dealers receive for performing warranty repairs and the rates they charge for retail work. Labour rates under warranty negotiated between each dealer and the manufacturer. Warranty administration procedures encourage dealers to refuse or delay the performance of warranty repairs. Manufacturers reject over 20% of warranty claims. No significant difference between the percentage of dissatisfied customers in Canada and the United States.

Rowand, Roger (1981), "Improve It or Lose It, Industry Told," Automotive News, March 2, p. 2,46.

In a speech to the Society of Automotive Engineers, F. James McDonald, president of GM stated that the U.S. auto industry has to improve its quality and cost-competitiveness or go off-shore or go down the drain. "Comeback--that is customers taking their cars back to the dealer more than once for the same problem--is the highest single reason for customer dissatisfaction." GM is monitoring customer satisfaction performance of 2000 of their largest dealers through a survey sent to first year owners of GM cars.

Swan, John E. and Linda Jones Combs (1976), "Product Performance and Consumer Satisfaction: A New Concoct," Journal of Marketing, 40 (April), 25-33.

The authors examine the relationship between expectations, performance, and satisfaction; the expressive (psychological) and instrumental (physical) dimensions of a product (clothing) are studied. They argue that satisfaction involves the processes of instrumental and expressive performance that meet or exceeds expectations and that either alone are not sufficient conditions for satisfaction. Satisfaction tends to be associated with expressive outcomes and dissatisfaction with instrumental outcomes. The authors test several hypotheses related to satisfaction/dissatisfaction and instrumental/expressive outcomes using a small, student sample. The results show that satisfaction is associated with performance that fulfills expectations, while dissatisfaction occurs when performance expectations are not fulfilled. Outcomes from a hierarchy motion suggest that instrumental requirements must be satisfied first before satisfaction can occur and the determination of satisfaction involves relative rather than absolute judgments. Implications relating to knowledge of consumer behaviour and consumer analyses for marketing decisions are given.

Swan, John E. and Douglas S. Longman (1973), "Consumer Satisfaction with Automobile Repair Performance: Attitudes Towards the Industry in Governmental Control," in Combined Proceedings, Boris W. Becker and Helmut Becker; eds., Chicago, Illinois: American Marketing Association 249-55.

A questionnaire was administered by both personal interviews and mail to 195 owners of automobiles purchased between June, 1966 and May, 1971 in Austin, Texas. These respondents represent the result of drawing a sample of 400 names from the original vehicle registrations. Questions concerned the number of repairs, satisfaction, attitudes towards the automobile industry and automobile industry marketing practices as well as attitudes towards various forms of government intervention. While approximately only 20% were dissatisfied with the repair record, the survey results indicated a general scepticism towards the automobile industry and its associated practices. There was a high level of agreement that the automobile companies could be building better cars and that the government should be doing more regarding information, warranties and auto quality standards. The results also indicated that more repairs were associated with less satisfaction, less satisfaction was associated with lower levels of agreement concerning the industry as a source of consumer protection, higher satisfaction associated with expressed agreement that the market price protects the consumer against poor quality, and that increased satisfaction would be significantly associated with less agreement to the questions calling for greater governmental control. The results also indicated small positive correlations about government intervention and occupation, age, income and socio-economic index.

Tardif, Monique B. (1980), "The Experience of 6,000 Québécois With Their Cars," Protect Yourself, (October), 5-12.

This article reports the responses of 6,300 owners of cars who responded to a questionnaire published in the November, 1979 issue of Protect Yourself. The results are presented for 79 car models between the years 1975 and 1979 with five-point rating scales given across ten car characteristics, one general appraisal item and overall rate of satisfaction. The degree of satisfaction of respondents according to manufacture has also been provided and shows the lower level of satisfaction for automobiles produced in North America.

Thirkell, Peter C. (1980), "Consumer Expectations, Disconfirmation and Satisfaction", Doctoral Dissertation, University of Western Ontario, (September).

This study investigated the interrelationships among time-of-purchase consumer expectations, the extent to which those expectations had been fulfilled and levels of consumer satisfaction. A model is proposed stating that consumer expectations and subsequent disconfirmation were said to be function of the consumer's past experience with the product, prepurchase search activity, individual differences and situational factors. The model was tested empirically using data obtained in a mail survey of 985 Canadian consumers who lived in BC, Manitoba, Ontario or Nova Scotia, and who had purchased one of four specific new car models (compact-Chevette, intermediate-Malibu, full size - Impala and "sports" - Camaro) from General Motors. All purchases had been made during the preceding twenty months.

The results supported the view that perceived performance is, "ceteris paribus", a function of expectations. Overall consumer satisfaction was shown to be a direct linear function of the extent to which expectations were positively or negatively disconfirmed. Furthermore, the magnitude of felt consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction was found to be a direct function of the level of prior expectations held. Consumer expectations and subsequent levels of disconfirmation were found to be a function of prepurchase search activities, individual differences, and the household situation.

Warland, Rex H., Robert O., Hermann, and Jane, Willits, (1975)
"Dissatisfied Consumers: Who Gets Upset and Who Takes Action",
Journal of Consumer Affairs, (Winter), 148-163.

In the fall of 1972, 1215 telephone interviews were conducted from a nationwide (U.S.) random stratified sample, in an attempt to get a profile of complainers. 32% of actions consisted of personal complaints. The individual who complained and took action tended to be: better educated, of a higher social class, more active in formal organizations, politically committed, liberal, exhibit a general dissatisfaction with business practices, and very interested in consumerism. An implication of findings is that consumer dissatisfaction is underrepresented based on complaint data compiled by business and government agencies.

Westbrook, Robert A. (1980) "A Rating Scale for Measuring Product/Service Satisfaction", Journal of Marketing, 44 (Fall), 68-72.

This paper is a study among 72 upper-level undergraduate and graduate students, 151 female heads of households in two large south-eastern cities, and 47 undergraduates at a state university to examine the reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and nomological validity (behaviour in accordance with theoretical predictions) of a single item delighted-terrible scale. Alternative measures of satisfaction are the percentage level of satisfaction and the satisfaction of needs scale as well as correlations with "realization of expectations for favourable outcomes" and "realization of expectations for unfavourable outcomes". Of relevance are the application of the scales to the auto purchase in Study 1.

Westbrook, Robert A. (1980), "Intrapersonal Affective Influences on Consumer Satisfaction with Products," Journal of Consumer Research, 7(June), 49-54.

Two product categories of automobiles and footwear apparel were investigated in a questionnaire administered among 194 undergraduate students at the University of Arizona. Hypothesized relationships between product satisfaction and various cognitive and affective influences were evaluated by multiple regression. The positive coefficients for realization of expectations and life satisfaction and the negative coefficients of consumer discontent were significant at the 0.05 level. Not significant were the variables representing the optimism, pessimism, mood, and social desirability constructs. The findings were interpreted as supporting a proposition that product satisfaction is partly a function of broader affective influences within the consumer, in addition to purchase-specific cognitive factors, such as the extent to which product outcomes meet or exceed expectations.

Westbrook, Robert A., Joseph W. Newman, and James R. Taylor (1978), "Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction in the Purchase Decision Process," Journal of Marketing, 42 (October), 54-60.

The paper discusses how satisfied or dissatisfied consumers are with their experience in arriving at purchase decisions. The research focuses on recent experiences with buying a major household appliance. A sample of 236 recent buyers and 152 prospective buyers from Suburban Detroit was used. In general the findings fail to support the view of widespread discontent with the purchase decision process among consumers. Approximately 90% of recent buyers reported satisfaction with the product and brand alternatives from which they could choose. While significantly more responses indicative of dissatisfaction are given by prospective buyers, the overall pattern is of widespread satisfaction. The survey is however restricted to suburban residents of a metropolitan area; and respondents tend to be younger, better educated and more affluent than the U.S. population as a whole.

